

I am proud to represent an organization that has spent so many years in the service of others. I wish to extend my thanks, and the thanks of all those who have been helped by members of the Club. I encourage my colleagues to join me in saluting Skippack Lions Club on reaching this milestone.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
RUTH BARBER

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements and honoring the service of Ruth Barber.

Ruth has devoted much of her life in the service of others. Much of that time was service to the United States Postal Service. Most recently, Ruth served as the National PAC Chair with the National Association of Postmasters of the United States (NAPUS) until she retired.

Ruth grew up in New Athens, Illinois, "on the wrong side of the tracks" as she puts it. Her father was a coal miner and her mother was a housewife. Ruth married Raymond Barber on August 30, 1941 and he passed away in 1982. Ruth and Ray had two children, a son Richard who passed away in 1995 and the "joy of her life," her daughter Barbara.

Ruth worked as a drill press operator at the Bostich Wire Staple plant during World War II. While at Bostich, Ruth was responsible for drilling the barrels on Garrand rifles and inspected the 30 and 50 caliber shells at the small arms plant in St. Louis, Missouri.

Her service with the United States Postal Service began in 1967, as a clerk in the U.S. Post Office in Freeburg, Illinois. The local Postmaster at the time, Mr. Herbert Baltz, hired Ruth and she then worked in every position available at the Post Office in Freeburg. She started as a clerk, and also worked as a window clerk, Supervisor, finance office, Assistant Postmaster and the Officer in Charge (OIC). She was appointed the U.S. Postmaster of Freeburg in October 1979.

Her involvement with NAPUS started in 1975, when she was a Supervisor. Her active involvement in NAPUS activities allowed her to be appointed as the State Chair in 1990. Ruth has attended every state convention of NAPUS since 1982 and has attended all the national conventions as well. Ruth also has attended every Leadership Conference in Washington, DC since 1982. She retired from the active service with the United States Post Office on August 30, 1990 but remained active in the community having served with the Freeburg Chamber of Commerce.

Ruth works tirelessly in the service of the USPS and NAPUS. I have visited with Ruth on more than one occasion where she has strongly advocated the issues and concerns of the working men and women of the United States Postal Service. She has a genuine, personal interest in helping to improve the working conditions at the Postal Service. Ruth performs all of her duties with a tremendous gusto and enthusiasm, unique to her. I am proud to honor the service of Ruth Barber and wish her all the best in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service and the achievements of Ruth Barber and wish her and her family all the best.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHANIE MUELLER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before this body of Congress today to honor an outstanding citizen and a community hero. Stephanie Mueller of Pagosa Springs, Colorado showed quick thinking and level-headedness in the face of personal danger and helped to prevent a catastrophic forest fire. I am honored to share her story here today.

Stephanie was traveling in Archuleta county when she noticed a fire in the trees. Unable to contact local authorities immediately, Stephanie took her shovel and began digging a fire line around the burn area. As others arrived at the site, Stephanie was able to use the skills she learned as part of a Forest Service hand crew to instruct onlookers as to what they could do to help her keep the fire contained until Archuleta Country firefighters arrived and extinguished the blaze.

This is the second time Stephanie has saved her community from a devastating fire. Three years ago Stephanie encountered another fire while driving in the Coyote Park area, which she helped to extinguish. For her efforts in that fire, Stephanie received the much-deserved Angel of the Highway award.

Mr. Speaker, Stephanie Mueller's courage is an inspiration to us all. As ashes fell on her head and shoulders, Stephanie sacrificed her own personal safety for the good of her community. I join with my colleagues and a grateful community in extending my thanks and appreciation to Stephanie Mueller.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EMPLOYEE BENEFIT RESEARCH INSTITUTE (EBRI)

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) on its 25th Anniversary. Over the last quarter century, Congress has been expertly informed by the Institute's bipartisan and balanced analysis of retirement and health benefits issues. I, therefore, ask my colleagues to join me in saluting this important milestone for EBRI.

Efforts to privatize Social Security, the ongoing corporate governance and pension scandals, and the need to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare make the work of EBRI now more important than ever. Members have come to trust the Institute's data and analysis of these complex issues and today we recognize their contributions to the ongoing debates in these areas.

In addition, I appreciate the fact that they are not advocates. Instead, the Institute simply provides the unvarnished data and let the

numbers speak for themselves. Their work has helped me to more thoroughly evaluate policy options. I would like to thank them for the assistance they've provided over the years.

Mr. Speaker, as the Employee Benefit Research Institute celebrates its 25th Anniversary, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to its significant accomplishments and dedication to public service. I'm sure they will continue to serve Congress and our nation for decades to come.

THE PENSION FUNDING EQUITY
ACT OF 2003

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join BILL THOMAS, Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, JOHN BOEHNER, Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and GEORGE MILLER, Ranking Democrat on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, to introduce the "Pension Funding Equity Act of 2003." This bill responds to the most pressing pension issue of the day that affects the retirement benefits of 44 million American workers, their families, and beneficiaries. I am pleased that bipartisan cooperation has allowed this process to move forward and enabled us to take action on this important issue.

The lack of retirement security for millions of workers is an issue that demands our immediate attention. More than 50 percent of American workers who work full-time and play by all the rules of corporate America have no retirement benefits. I will not rest until this Congressional body takes the necessary steps to correct this disparity.

The issue addressed in this bill is of great importance as well. The fortunate few workers who do have a pension benefit under our defined benefit system are depending on us to protect those benefits. This bill would accomplish this goal for the next two years by providing plan sponsors the certainty they need in determining the amount that must be contributed to the plan. However, a permanent solution to this issue must be found.

The long-term viability of the defined benefit plan system is crucial for the secured retirement of millions of American workers. Designing a plan to maintain this viability will be a challenge we must undertake over the next two years. Any permanent solution must balance the competing elements of this issue, including (1) providing financial relief to employers who maintain defined benefit plans, (2) protecting the financial security of the pension benefits promised to workers under these plans, and (3) protecting the financial strength of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, the agency that insures benefits under these plans. I remain hopeful that we can work together to accomplish these goals.

I have long supported the idea of advancing legislation on this issue in a free and unfettered manner. This issue should not be held hostage to additional pension reforms that have little or no chance of being enacted this year. I am pleased to co-sponsor this legislation, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to develop a long-term solution to this issue.